

# Headlines

News from University Place City Hall



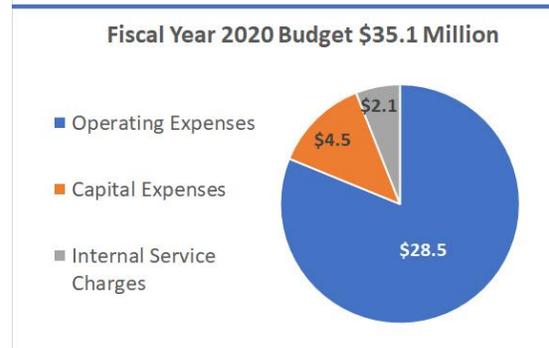
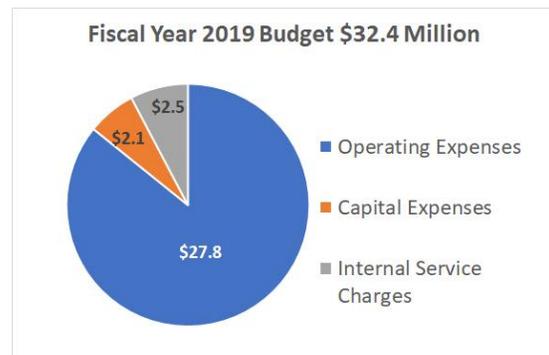
January 9, 2019

## City Council Approves 2019-2020 Budget

On Dec. 17, 2018, the University Place City Council passed the 2019-2020 budget. The 2019 budget calls for \$27.8 million in operating funds, \$2.1 million in capital funds and \$2.5 million in Internal Service charges, for a total of \$32.4 million. For fiscal year 2020, the operating funds are to be \$28.5 million, capital funds will be \$4.5 million, and Internal Service charges will be \$2.1 million for a total proposed budget of \$35.1 million.

City Manager Steve Sugg said that most of the 2019-2020 budget reflects modest changes in existing programs and services, but two areas of new investment include the allocation of one-time revenues to fund a public works crewmember and a police patrol officer for the next 10 years. "By using one-time revenues to fund services for defined periods of time, we can continue to contain costs and allocate resources for new projects or services only after funding has been secured," he said. "This ensures that we will have enough resources to fund basic levels of services, even in the event of an economic downturn."

The City Council has continued to build a strong financial baseline while focused on economic development to support growing demand for essential services. The 2019-2020 budget continues this trend, with more emphasis on a phased implementation of plans developed in prior years, including the City's Subarea Plan to earn the Regional Growth Center designation. "The Subarea Plan takes a comprehensive look at the economic vitality and livability of a 465-acre area in the heart of University Place that will be the focus of our redevelopment and growth efforts over the next 20 years," Sugg said. "In 2019-2020, we will be evaluating new development options that will further the plan, as well as new infrastructure



investments in partnership with the private sector.”

Sugg says the proposed budget also includes the Council’s recent decision to increase the City’s vehicle license fee from \$20 to \$35 annually. “With this increased revenue, we project we will be able to chip seal almost half of the City’s residential streets and overlay a quarter of the City’s collector streets over the next five years,” he said. “With conservative budgeting and strategic investment, we project that the City will have sufficient resources to maintain existing service levels and to meet all its statutory and contractual obligations.”

## Fact vs. Fiction

In early December, a student at Curtis Junior High posted a threat on his Instagram account that indicated he wanted to harm students and staff at several U.P. schools.

That threat was thoroughly investigated by the U.P. Police Department. The suspect was quickly apprehended and it was determined students and staff could safely go to school. But as happens all too often with social media, U.P. Police Chief Mike Blair says the threat took on a life of its own, causing many parents to keep their kids home from school, even after the threat was eliminated.

“In the land of social media, misinformation snowballs,” he said. “Social media provides no control over the message. There is no way to check the credibility of what is posted.” In the case of the December threat, some people were paying more attention to the unofficial news on social media as opposed to the official news coming from their own public safety experts.

“If we think the threat is real, you can bet we will say so. But you can also bet that if there is something on social media that is unfounded, we will come out and say it as well,” Blair said. “But I want the people of University Place to know that we would never send anyone to school if there is a security threat. When we send out a message that it is safe, we mean it.”

As an extra precaution and to reassure jittery parents, students and staff after the threat was made, Blair even paid for additional officers to be deployed to all U.P. schools as an extra precaution. “But that means those are resources that could have been used elsewhere to address real threats and real problems,” Blair said.

As a parent himself, Blair understands every parents’ desire to keep their children safe. But he encourages people to get their information from credible sources, not from various social media sites and posts. “Our job is keeping the people of U.P. safe,” he said. He encourages residents to follow the **Pierce County Sheriff’s Office on Facebook**, where they will find accurate updates on public safety incidents in U.P. and other parts of the County. “Parents can also speak to our School Resource Officers to get answers to their questions and concerns. This is the best way to get up-to-date, correct information and, in doing so, make the best use of our limited resources,” Blair added.

## Sunset Terrace Park Re-Opens Following Improvements

University Place children (and their parents) are celebrating the re-opening

of one of the City's most popular parks, Sunset Terrace at 1902 Seaview St. W. The park was closed last year when it became clear that the tot lot and associated wooden play structures that were installed in 1999 had reached their useful life expectancy. Maintenance and repairs on the equipment were no longer cost efficient.



The Sunset Terrace Park improvement project was included in the 2018 Parks Capital Improvement Budget, with half of the total cost of \$272,459 coming from Park Impact Fees and half from the Real Estate Excise Tax. Among the improvements made to the park were the installation of new and safer ADA-compliant tot lot amenities as well as a rubberized safety matting surface. The park also includes a covered park pavilion, youth soccer and little league/tee-ball fields.

On the day the fencing came down, it was only a matter of minutes before kids from the neighborhood ran over to "christen" the new equipment, including the new 100-foot zip line. "Although Sunset Terrace Park is the oldest park in our University Place Parks system, it remains a popular destination," said Gary Cooper, the City's Director of Public Works, Parks & Facilities. "We know the kids in the neighborhood have been waiting patiently to be able to enjoy it again. Based on the feedback we've gotten so far, it appears the wait was worth it."

## Got the Post-Holiday Blues? This Will Cheer You Up!

Want to relive the magic of the annual Christmas Tree Lighting in Market Square?

The **City of U.P.'s YouTube Channel** has several videos that capture the smiles, music and moments with Santa, as well as the actual minute that Santa flipped the switch and the tree lit up. So even though the holidays are over, take a minute to check out these videos. Who knows—you might even see someone you know!



View the 2018 Christmas Tree Lighting recap video and more at **UniversityPlaceTV** on YouTube!

## Curran Apple Orchard Park 2019 Tree Adoptions Available!

Applications for the 2019 Adopt An Apple Tree program at the Curran Apple Orchard Park in University Place are now available. Tree adoptions are a great gift as well as giving people a wonderful way to support a community park and a chance to enjoy delicious apples in the Fall!

People who are interested in adopting an apple tree have two options:

- **Pruning Adoption (available from December through April)**
- **Orchard Supporter Adoption (available all year)**

**Pruning Adoptions are available for \$45** and are reserved for people who commit to prune, thin, harvest and clean up windfalls from their tree according to orchard guidelines. Free pruning classes and trained volunteers are available to help and provide guidance.

**Orchard Supporter Adoptions are available for \$70** and are perfect for people who want to support the orchard and enjoy the harvest but are unable to participate in tree care. Trained volunteers will take care of the trees for people choosing this option.

All tree adopters are entitled to the harvest from their trees in the Fall. Adopter names will appear on their trees. While people who adopted trees in 2018 have first priority for the 2019 season, there are usually ample trees to choose from with the majority of trees being Gravenstein, Golden Delicious and MacIntosh.

The Curran Apple Orchard Park is a seven-acre working apple orchard with more than 250 apple trees located at 3920 Grandview Drive in University Place. CORE (Curran Orchard Volunteer Enthusiasts) is a volunteer group which sponsors the Adopt A Tree program, pruning parties, summer concerts and the annual Cider Squeeze.

Everyone is welcome to attend CORE meetings which occur on the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the University Place City Hall Complex, 3715 Bridgeport Way West in University Place.

For more information and to download a Tree Adoption application, visit [www.curranappleorchard.com](http://www.curranappleorchard.com).

## Back to Basics

Sometimes while making an effort to prevent things like fertilizers and motor oil from entering our stormwater system, we can forget about our most common pollutant: litter.

Everything from cigarette butts to plastic shopping bags present a real and present danger to animals and plants that rely on our waters. So don't forget to:

- Always cover your trash cans with lids so debris doesn't blow away.
- Forego plastic water bottles (90 percent of which are not recycled!) and save money and the environment by drinking from a reusable bottle.
- Don't toss your cigarette butt on the ground. According to Keep America Beautiful, improperly discarded cigarette butts are the most frequently identified item along U.S. roadways. Dispose of your cigarettes in an appropriate container.
- Keep reusable shopping bags in the trunk of your car so you always have them with you when you stop at the store.
- Always try to recycle cans, bottles, newspapers, etc. But if you can't, at least make sure they find their way to a trash bin...and not the street.
- Teach your children. Keep America Beautiful reports that confections (i.e. candy wrappers, gum, etc.) are the most common source of litter. Teach children early to respect and protect the waterways they will inherit.

*Reference: **Keep America Beautiful***

# City Hall Holiday Closure

City Hall will be closed on Monday, January 21 in recognition of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. City Hall will reopen on Tuesday, January 22 at 9 a.m.

**For upcoming events and Council Meeting information  
visit the Upcoming Events Calendar.**

## University Place City Council



**Mayor Kent Keel**



**Mayor Pro Tem Caroline Belleci**



**Council Member  
Javier Figueroa**



**Council Member  
Steve  
Worthington**



**Council Member  
Ken Grassi**



**Council Member  
Denise  
McCluskey**



**Council Member  
Chris Nye**

